completely for 50 miles, partly to prevent a possibility of its restoration and partly to utilize the time necessary for Gen. Slocum to get up.

The country thereabouts was very poor, but the inhabitants mostly remained at home. Indeed, they knew not where to go. The enemy's cavalry had retreated before us, but his infantry was reported in some strength at Branchville, on the farther side of the Edisto; yet on the appearance of a mere squad of our men they burned their own bridges—the very thing I wanted, for we had no use for them, and they had.

We all remained strung along this railroad till the 9th of February—the Seventeenth Corps on the right, then the Fifteenth, Twentieth, and cavalry, at Blackville. Gen. Slocum reached Blackville that day with Geary's Division, of the Twentieth Corps, and reported the Fourteenth Corps (Gen. Jeff. C. Davis's) to be following by way of Barnwell. On the 10th I rode up to Blackville, where I conferred with Gens. Slocum and Kilpatrick, became satisfied that the whole army would be ready within a day, and accordingly made orders for the next movement north to Columbia, the right wing to strike Orangeburg *en route*. Kilpatrick was ordered to demonstrate strongly toward Aiken, to keep up the delusion that we might turn to Augusta; but he was notified that Columbia was the next objective, and that he should cover the left flank against Wheeler, who hung around it. I wanted to reach Columbia before any part of Hood's army could possibly get there. Some of them were reported as having reached Augusta, under the command of Gen. Dick Taylor.

Having sufficiently damaged the railroad, and effected the junction of the entire army, the general march was resumed on the 11th, each corps crossing the South Edisto by separate bridges, with orders to pause on the road leading from Orangeburg to Augusta, till it was certain that the Seventeenth Corps had got possession of Orangeburg. This place was simply important as its occupation would sever the communications between Charleston and Columbia. All the heads of column reached this road, known as the Edgefield road, during the 12th, and the Seventeenth Corps turned to the right, against Orangeburg.

When I reached the head of column opposite Orangeburg, I found Giles A. Smith's Division halted, with a battery unlimbered, exchanging shots with a party on the opposite side of the Edisto. He reported that the bridge was gone, and that the river was deep and impassable. I then directed Gen. Blair to send a strong division below the town some four or five miles, to effect a crossing there. He laid his pontoon-bridge, but the bottom on the other side was overflowed, and the men had to wade through it, in places as deep as their waists.

I was with this division at the time, on foot, trying to pick my way across the overflowed bottom; but, as soon as the head of column reached the sand-hills, I knew that the enemy would not long remain in Orangeburg, and accordingly returned to my horse, on the west bank, and rode rapidly up to where I had left Giles A. Smith. I found him in possession of the broken bridge, abreast of the town, which he was repairing, and I was among the first to cross over and enter the town. By and before the time either Force's or Giles A. Smith's skirmishers entered the place, several stores were on fire, and I am sure that some of the towns-people told me that a Jew merchant had set fire to his own cotton and store, and from this the fire had spread.

SEVENTEENTH CORPS IN ORANGEBURG.

This, however, was soon put out, and the Seventeenth Corps (Gen. Blair) occupied the place during that night. I remember to have visited a large hospital, on the hill near the railroad depot, which was occupied by the orphan children who had been removed from the asylum in Charleston. We gave them protection, and, I think, some provisions. The railroad and depot were destroyed by order, and no doubt a good deal of cotton was burned, for we all regarded cotton as hostile property, a thing to be destroyed. Gen. Blair was ordered to break up this railroad forward to the point where it crossed the Santee, and then to turn for Columbia.

On the morning of the 13th I again joined the Fifteenth Corps, which crossed the North Edisto by Smilling's Bridge, and moved straight for Columbia, around the head of Caw-Caw Swamp. Orders were sent to all the columns to turn for Columbia, where it was supposed the enemy had concentrated all the men they could from Charleston, Augusta, and even from Virginia. That night I was with the Fifteenth Corps, 21 miles from Columbia, where my Aid, Col. Audenried, picked up a rebel officer on the road, who, supposing him to be of the same service with himself, answered all his questions frankly, and revealed the truth that there was nothing in Columbia except Hampton's cavalry.

The fact was, that Gen. Hardee, in Charleston, took it for granted that we were after Charleston; the rebel troops in Augusta supposed they "were our objective;" so they abandoned poor Columbia to the care of Hampton's cavalry, which was confused by the rumors that poured in on it, so that both Beauregard and Wade Hampton, who were in Columbia, seem to have lost their heads.

On the 14th the head of the Fifteenth Corps, Charles R. Woods's Division, approached the Little Congaree, a broad, deep stream, tributary to the Main Congaree, six or eight miles below Columbia. On the opposite side of this stream was a newly-constructed fort, and on our side a wide extent of old cottonfields, which had been overflowed, and was covered with a deep slime.

ENEMY INTERPOSE OBJECTIONS.

Gen. Woods had deployed his leading brigade, which was skirmishing forward, but he reported that the bridge was gone, and that a considerable force of the enemy was on the other side. I directed Gen. Howard or Logan to send a brigade by a circuit to the left, to see if this stream could not be crossed higher up, but at the same time knew that Gen. Slocum's route would bring him to Columbia behind this stream, and that his approach would uncover it. Therefore, there was no need of exposing much life. The brigade, however, found means to cross the Little Congaree, and thus uncovered the passage by the main road, so that Gen. Wood's skirmishers at once passed over, and a party was set to work to repair the bridge, which occupied less than an hour, when I passed over with my whole staff.

I found the new fort unfinished and unoccupied, but from its parapet could see over some old fields bounded to the north and west by hills skirted with timber. There was a plantation to our left, about half a mile, and on the edge of the timber was drawn up a force of rebel cavalry of about a regiment, which advanced, and charged upon some of our foragers, who were plundering the plantation. My Aid, Col. Audenried, who had ridden forward, came back somewhat hurt and bruised, for, observing this charge of cavalry, he had turned for us, and his horse fell with him in attempting to leap a ditch. Gen.

DISAGREEABLE MARCHING FOR SHERMAN AND HIS MEN.

Woods's skirmish-line met this charge of cavalry, and drove it back into the woods and beyond.

We remained on that ground during the night of the 15th, and I camped on the nearest dry ground behind the Little Congaree, where on the next morning were made the written orders for the government of the troops while occupying Columbia. These are dated Feb. 16, 1865, in these words:

"Gen. Howard will cross the Saluda and Broad Rivers as near their mouths as possible, occupy Columbia, destroy the public buildings, railroad property, manufacturing and machine shops; but will spare libraries, asylums, and private dwellings. He will then move to Winnsboro', destroying en route utterly that section of railroad. He will also cause all bridges, trestles, water-tanks, and depots on the railroad back to the Wateree to be burned, switches broken, and such other destruction as he can find time to accomplish consistent with proper celerity."

LOOKING TO FAYETTEVILLE.

These intructions were embraced in General Order 26, which prescribed the routes of march for the several columns as far as Fayetteville, N. C., and is conclusive that I then regarded Columbia as simply one point on our general route of march, and not as an important conquest.

During the 16th of February the Fifteenth Corps reached the point opposite Columbia, and pushed on for the Saluda Factory three miles above, crossed that stream, and the head of column reached Broad River just in time to find its bridge in flames, Butler's cavalry having just passed over into Columbia. The head of Slocum's column also reached the point opposite Columbia the same morning, but the bulk of his army was back at Lexington.

I reached this place early in the morning of the 17th, met Gen. Slocum there, and explained to him the purport of General Order No. 26, which contemplated the passage of his army across Broad River at Alston, 15 miles above Columbia. Riding down to the river bank I saw the wreck of the large bridge which had been burned by the enemy, with its many stone piers still standing, but the superstructure gone. Across the Congaree River lay the city of Columbia, in plain, easy view. I could see the unfinished State-house, a handsome granite structure, and the ruins of the railroad depot, which were still smoldering. Occasionally a few citizens or cavalry could be seen running across the streets, and quite a number of negroes were seemingly busy in carrying off bags of grain or meal, which were piled up near the burned depot.

Capt. De Gres had a section of his 20-pound Parrott guns unlimbered, firing into the town. I asked him what he was firing for; he said he could see some of the rebel cavalry occasionally at the intersections of the streets, and he had an idea that there was a large force of infantry concealed on the opposite bank, lying low, in case we should attempt to cross over directly into the town. I instructed him not to fire any more into the town, but consented to his bursting a few shells near the depot, to scare away the negroes who were appropriating the bags of corn and meal, which we wanted, also to fire three shots at the unoccupied State-house. I stood by and saw these fired, and then all firing ceased.

Although this matter of firing into Columbia has been the subject of much abuse and investigation, I have yet to hear of any single person having been killed in Columbia by our cannon. On the other hand, the night before, when Woods's Division was in camp in the open fields at Little Congaree, it was shelled all night by a rebel battery from the other side of the river. This provoked me much at the time, for it was wanton mischief, as Gens. Beauregard and Hampton must have been convinced that they could not prevent our entrance into Columbia. I have always contended that I would have been justified in retaliating for this unnecessary act of war, but did not, though I always characterized it as it deserved.

HOVELS FOR UNION MEN.

The night of the 16th I camped near an old prison bivouac opposite Columbia, known to our prisoners of war as "Camp Sorghum," where remained mud hovels and holes in the ground which our prisoners had made to shelter themselves from the Winter's cold and the Summers' heat. The Fifteenth Corps was then ahead, reaching to Broad River, about four miles above Columbia; the Seventeenth Corps was behind, on the river bank opposite Columbia; and the left wing and cavalry had turned north toward Alston.

The next morning, viz, Feb. 17, I rode to the head of Gen. Howard's column, and found that during the night he had ferried Stone's Brigade, of Woods's Division of the Fifteenth Corps, across by rafts made of the pontoons, and that brigade was then deployed on the opposite bank to cover the construction of a pontoon-bridge nearly finished.

I sat with Gen. Howard on a log, watching the men lay this bridge; and about 9 or 10 a. m. a messenger came from Col. Stone, on the other side, saying that the Mayor of Columbia had come out of the city to surrender the place, and asking for orders. I simply remarked to Gen. Howard that he had his orders, to let Col. Stone go on into the city, and that we would follow as soon as the bridge was ready.

By this same messenger I received a note in pencil from the Lady Superioress of a convent or school in Columbia, in which she claimed to have been a teacher in a convent in Brown County, O., at the time my daughter Minnie was a pupil there, and therefore asking special protection. My recollection is that I gave the note to my brother-in-law, Col. Ewing, then Inspector-General on my staff, with instructions to see this lady, and assure her that we contemplated no destruction of any private property in Columbia at all.

ESCAPED PRISONERS REJOICE.

As soon as the bridge was done, I led my horse over it, followed by my whole staff. Gen. Howard accompanied me with his, and Gen. Logan was next in order, followed by Gen. C. R. Woods and the whole of the Fifteemth Corps. Ascending the hill, we soon emerged into a broad road leading into Columbia, between old fields of corn and cotton, and, entering the city, we found seemingly all its population, white and black, in the streets. A high and boisterous wind was prevailing from the north, and flakes of cotton were flying about in the air and lodging in the limbs of the trees, reminding us of a Northern snowstorm.

Near the market-square we found Stone's Brigade halted, with arms stacked, and a large detail of his men, along with some citizens, engaged with an old fire engine, trying to put out the fire in a long pile of burning cotton-bales, which I was told had been fired by the rebel cavalry on withdrawing from the city that morning. I know that, to avoid this row of burning cotton-bales, I had to ride my horse on the sidewalk. In the market-square had collected a large crowd of whites and blacks, among whom was the Mayor of the city, Dr. Goodwin, quite a respectable old gentleman, who was extremely anxious to protect the interests of the citizens. He was on foot, and I on horseback, and it is probable I told him then not to be uneasy; that we did not intend to stay long, and had no purpose to injure the private citizens or private property.

[To be continued.]

Thomas B. Elliott, Cairo, Ill.: I send you the subscription of Comrade B. F. Clark, a veteran of two wars and a member of my Post. I have been lending him my paper, but he wants to subscribe for himself. He says he could not do without it. I think every old soldier in the country should take THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE. It is their duty to support such a paper.

By JOHN McELROY.

CHAPTER I.

Miriam Inrule was "spinning on the big wheel."

To say that she was so engaged was to say that there was a fine exhibition of womanly beauty and loveliness.

Nothing that a comely woman can do is better calculated to display her to fine advantage than this art of our grandmothers, which is still practiced by the women of the primitive people who dwell in the remote valleys and "coves" of the southern Alleghanies.

Two kinds of wheels are used for spinning—the "little wheel," at which the spinner sits and works with a treadle, to spin flax; and the "big wheel," on which she spins wool. She has the wool carded into long, soft, fleecy "rolls," a basket-full of which are at her feet. She picks up one, draws its end to a thread, fastens this to the yarn already on the spindle, gives the large wooden wheel a sharp whirl with a stick in her right hand, that sets the spindle humming pleasantly, and walks backward, skillfully drawing the "roll" out into a long stretch of evenly-twisted yarn, which, when finished, is deftly wound up on the spindle, as she walks forward again, and picks up another "roll" to repeat the operation.

All over the mountainside Miriam Inrule had a fame as a skillful spinster, to which even her reputation for beauty was subordinate. Those simple mountaineers admire beauty, as all the world does, but character and personal qualities count for far more than good looks or grace of form. The antique ideas of our race survive there in all their strength.

A man is esteemed for his courage, strength, industry, honesty, kindliness. A woman's standing is based upon her domestic virtues, and her skill in the kitchen, at the spinning-wheel and at the loom. It is well for her to be beautiful, but still better to be deft with the spindle and shuttle.

No woman, young or old, in all the Chincapin Cove or the country roundabout, could surpass or even equal Miriam Inrule in the number of "hanks" of fine, strong, perfectly even yarn that she could spin in a week. Spinning is even more an indication of character than handwriting. The good spinner must not merely be minded to do her work well, but she must have force of character to keep in that mind every minute while she is engaged in her task. If she be a fitful, emotional person this will inevitably show itself in her work. In her moments of thoughtfulness and care her yarn will be closely twisted, even and smooth. But her lapses will be recorded by lumps, knots, thicker and thinner stretches, and other flaws very unsightly in the weaver's and knitter's eyes. That Miriam Inrule was so good a spinner was a demonstration that she was a young woman of not only a good deal of pride, which showed itself in a desire to excel in her work, but of an unusually firm, equable temper, free from moods and vagaries.

So much for her major qualities. As to her minor ones: She was an uncommonly tall young woman, slender as mountain girls are prone to be, lithe and quick as they are certain to be, with fine curves showing through her linsey gown. She had a mass of reddish-brown hair, held in a compact knot by a high horn comb; a broad, full forehead; bright blue eyes, which had the habit of looking very direct and fixedly at any one; a symmetrical, finely-chiseled face, full of expression, and quite as full of freckles.

"Turkey eggs simply don't show up with my face toward the end of the Summer," she used to say frankly. "I could spare 'em more freckles than they have, and not miss 'em. The only way I could have more freckles 'd be to either make the freckles smaller or grow my face bigger."

Withal, she was a joy to the eye of the lover of beauty, as, intent upon her task, she swept back and forward on the porch, with quick, regular steps, as graceful as a young doe's in the free woods of the neighboring mountains. The cheerful hum of the spindle rose and fell to the rhythm of her movements.

In the yard before the house the lilacs were greeting the bright Spring sun with a burst of fragrant bloom. The bank beyond the road was white as a bride's robes, with the newly-opened flowers of the red buccoon. Birds sang cheerily amid the perfume-breathing buds of the hickories, and the air was filled with a new, fresh joy of living.

Spinning time was generally singing time. The elderly and more devout women sang the hymns they had learned at the Methodist meetings. The younger sang the quaint old English, Scotch and Irish ballads, which their forefathers and foremothers brought with them over the sea more than a century before. "Barbara Allen," "The Pizan Sarpint," "Sweet Dundee," "Chevy Chase," and similar folk-songs echoed from the rocks and cliffs of the Cumberlands as they had been reverberating from the Grampians and the Cheviots since a time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.

Miriam's heart was blithe as that of the thrush in the neighboring thicket, who was making melodious love to his mate as they joined in their nest-building labor. She broke out in a strong contralto, sweet and liquid as flute tones, with the words of the absurd old Scotch ballad, "Barbara Allen."

All in the merry month of May
When green buds they were swelling,
Young Jemmy Grove on his death-bed lay,
For love o' Barbara Allen.

He sent his man unto her then
To the town where she was dwelling.
"O, haste and come to my master dear,
If your name be Barbara Allen."

Slowly, slowly rase she up,
And she came where he was a-lying;
And when she drew the curtain by,
Says: "Young man, I think you are a-dying."

"O, it's I am sick and very, very sick,
And it's all for Barbara Allen."
"O, the better for me ye'se never be,
Tho' your heart's blood was a-spilling."

"O, dinna yo' mind, young man," says she,
When the red wine yo' was filling,
That yo' made the healths go round and round
And you slighted Barbara Allen."

He turned his face unto the wall,
And death was wi' him dealing.
"Adieu, adieu, my dear friends all,
I die for Barbara Allen."

But ere she went a mile away
The death-bell they 'gan knelling,
And every clout that they did give
Said "Wo to Barbara Allen."

"O, mother, mother, make my bed,
And make it saft and narrow;
My love has died for me to-day,
I'll die for him to-morrow."

As she prolonged the ridiculous notes at the conclusion of each verse, they chorded so exactly with the "kill-dee—kill-dee," of the killdeers in the near-by fields as to seem part of their song.

Her spindle was filled. She stopped and drew from against the wall the wooden reel, and began "reeling off" the accumulation of yarn. The reel gave a sharp cluck to register each "cut" that wound off, and she marked these by tying a piece of yarn around the bunch.

When she had wound all off the spindle, she removed the hank from the reel, placed her hands inside the coiled threads, and stretched the hank into an ellipse by separating her hands as far as possible. She raised it up toward the sunlight, and surveyed the mass of snowy, evenly-spun yarn with a glance of pride. Her loose sleeves fell back and revealed symmetrically rounded, strong arms, with skin as white and smooth as polished marble. The freckles stopped abruptly at her wrists.

She twisted the hank upon itself, and then hung it upon a peg in the side of the house.

As she turned to pick up another roll and resume her spinning, the dogs ran out with a wild clamor. She paused, roll in hand, and looked down the road.

"Who is it, Mirry?" called her disabled mother, from her rocking-chair inside the house.

Miriam looked intently down the road to where a horseman was picking his way across the slippery rocks in the shallow ford.

"Hit's Elder Stormmont," she replied. "Tige, come heah, sah! Cesar, stop that!"

The admonished leaders of the dogs hearkened to her voice, and came back inside the yard, the others following.

"He's comin' from the Conference at Knoxville," said her mother. "I'll be powerful glad to see him. He'll bring lots o' news. Better blow the horn for yer daddy, Mirry. He'll want t' see the Elder."

"Reckon he'll stay tuh dinner, an' then pap 'll see him."

The rider was a tall, spare man, past middle age, with a clean-shaven, strong, keen face. He was dressed in a suit of black luster, which was so generally the Summer costume of Methodist preachers of the mountains as to be almost a uniform. On his head was a tall silk hat. Hat and clothes had seen much wear, and had been out in rough weather. He had another trait of the Methodist clergy—he rode a good horse, and sat him well. A good horse and good horsemanship were even more necessary to a Methodist preacher in the mountains than sound theology. He might "fall from grace" theologically, and afterward recover his standing, by due penitence and amendment. But if he fell from one of the precipitous cliffs which abounded on his circuit his usefulness and his life were likely to end then and there.

"Mighty glad t' see you, Elder," said Miriam, springing down the path toward the gate, as the minister reined up. "Light, and come right in. Mother wants t' see ye awful bad."

"Very glad t' see you, Sister Miriam," said the Elder with grave kindliness, as he finished tying his horse and took her hand. "You are looking well. How is Sister Inrule?"

"Mother's much pearter since the weather's become settled. That misery in her back's gone, but she's not able to git about much, an' has t' set in her cheer nigh onto all the time."

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. It is hard for us to understand how a woman so good as Sister Inrule should be so afflicted. But that is among His mysteries, which may in time be revealed to us. In the meanwhile we must train our hearts to believe that His ways are just and merciful forevermore."

"Of course, y'll stay for dinner. I'm sorry to ask y' t' take y're critter to' the barn y'self an' gin him su'thin t' eat; but all our men folks air over t' the new ground settin' out terbacker plants, an' there's none o' them t' tend t' him."

"Don't worry about that, sister. I'm used to taking care o' my own critter, and like t' do it. Yes; I'll stay t' dinner. I had laid out t' do that. I wanted very much t' see all you'ns, an', besides, you know we circuit riders like good eating, an' I've often told you that nowhere on my circuit am I so certain of a good dinner as at Brother Inrule's."

"You'll be disapp'inted to-day, for I've been so busy with my spinnin' that I haint had time t' git nothin' extra But carry. "Who is that a-comin', Mirry?" called her mother, from the inside.

"It's only Henry Clay Pollock, mother," she replied, and her blushes became deeper than ever.

"Only Henry Clay Pollock," laughed her mother. "Yo' mean Henry Clay Pollock's all. I'm afeared he'll have a sorry crap o' terbacker if he don't pay more attention t' it, an' less t' yo'. This is the second time he's bin here this week."

The horse seemed to know his destination as well as his young rider. Untouched by the rein, he dashed up toward the gate, and stopped so suddenly that he almost went back on his haunches. His rider stepped to the ground with the easy grace of consummate horsemanship, threw the rifle into the hollow of his left arm, and hat in hand strode up to where Miriam had turned to meet him. The dogs leaped and barked about him as if welcoming a friend.

"I wasn't lookin' for yo' to-day, Clay," she said, as she put out her hand.

"Nor was I lookin' t' come over here to-day, Mirry," said he, kissing her hand. "But it seemed t' me that I couldn't stand it t' go 'nuther day 'thout seein' yo'. I got in all my terbacker yesterday, an' went into the woods airly this mornin' t' git out some logs for our house. But everythin' seemed t' be speakin' o' yo', dearest. I seed yo' face in the purtiest flowers; the dittany seemed t' smell o' yo', and the birds t' be singin' about yo'. Finally, I couldn't stand it no longer, so I jest jumped on Dan'l Webster, an' come tearin' over the mounting t' see yo'."

"Well, havin' done that e'er yo' kin jest jump on Dan'l Webster agin an' lope back over the mounting," she said teasingly. "But yo' needn't go right away till y've had yo' dinner. Elder Stormmont's here. Take Dan'l Webster round t' the stable, and help the Elder take keer o' his critter."

"The Elder here?" said he. "Why not let him marry us at once? It'll save him a long ride later on. An' yo' know I want yo' so much every day. It gits harder an' harder to wait for yo'."

Unresisted, he slipped his arm around her waist, and drew her close to him.

"But yo' must wait—until Fall, at least," said she gently. "Mebbe mother'll be well enough to take keer o' herself by that time. An', then, neither o' us is high ready. Yo' haint got our house even raised yit, an' I've only begun my spinnin'. See here."

She handed him the hank of yarn.

"That's for our blankets. I done spun that this mornin'. Ain't hit nice yarn?"

"The very nicest that any born woman ever spun," he said enthusiastically, and sealed his commendation with a kiss.

"There, now," she said, pushing him off, "take Dan'l Webster t' the stable, an' help the Elder. I must bustle 'round an' git dinner for yo' all."

A half-hour later Miriam came out on a little knoll at the corner of the house, on which grew profusely "old man," wormwood, tansy and other herbs, and blew a musical call on a long tin horn.

The Elder and Pollock went up to the house from the stable, and washed in the tin basin in the "entry" between the two parts of the double log house. By the basin hung a roller-towel made from flax grown on the farm, and spun and woven by Miriam's hands.

Presently the two were joined by Robert Inrule, the husband and father, and his two sturdy boys, younger than Miriam. All were clad the same way—tow shirts and trousers, the latter held up by yarn suspenders, the product of the household spinning-wheel and loom. Despite their uncouth speech and primitive ways, they had in their bone and marrow the sovereign qualities of common sense, courage, and honesty.

In the breezy entry the dinner-table was set, laden with homely viands, but such as unite with honest toil to build fair, stalwart bodies.

Scarcely had the Elder finished the blessing when there was a clatter on the road, and an uproar among the dogs. Two men mounted on good horses rode up to the gate. One was tall and rather slender. He wore a suit of black, with a white linen shirt, a black satin cravat and a silk hat. His face was smooth-shaven. The other was of much coarser mold, low-statured, burly, and with bearded face. He was slovenly attired in butternut jeans and a slouched hat.

"It's Col. Rhea and his overseer," said the Elder.

They were hospitably welcomed, and place made for them at the table.

"I've come up into the mountains to see if I couldn't buy a few head of cattle for my place," Col. Rhea explained in the course of the meal.

"MIRIAM INRULE WAS SPINNING."

The overseer seemed to take quite a fancy to Miriam, and directed his conversation to her in a way that made Pollock's face darken.

Leaving the table, they seated themselves in hickory chairs on the porch, and were furnished with cob pipes and twist tobacco.

"What's the news down at Knoxville, Elder?" inquired Robert Inrule, as one of his boys went from one to another with a coal of fire, caught up in hickory tongs, with which to light their pipes.

"Bad—very bad, replied the Elder, with the groan that he was accustomed to speak of the devil and his works. "I sometimes fear that the reign of the anti-Christ is beginning. Those wicked devils down at Charleston 've bombarded Fort Sumter, and made the soldiers surrender, President Lincoln has called for 75,000 men to put 'em down."

Col. Rhea's face darkened, and a snarl appeared on that of the overseer.

"The President's called for 75,000 men," said Robert Inrule, jubilantly. "That sounds like ole Andy Jackson."

"I pray God every hour t' give more strength t' his arm, and more wisdom t' his councils," said the Elder, solemnly.

"Elder Stormont, is it possible that you are an Abolitionist?" asked Col. Rhea, angrily.

"Col. Rhea, yo' know very well I'm no Abolitionist," returned the Elder. "Yo've knowed me and I've knowed yo' since we were boys, an' yo've no right to ask such a question. But I'm against, an' I alluz have bin against' yo' nigger-owners thinking yo' own the hull airth, and the fullness thereof. You're crazy on the subject o' niggers, an' yo' want t' cram 'em down our throats every hour o' the day. This country wasn't made for yo' an' yo' niggers. It wuz made for people who fear the Lord, and airn their bread by the sweat o' their own brows."

"It's yoh canting, sniveling preachers that's sowing treason among our people," said Col. Rhea, angrily. "You are a white-livered lot that want to knuckle down and bear every insult and oppression these nigger-loving Abolitionists put on us. There 'll never be any peace in the country till the last one of you are run out or hung."

"Looky here, Cunnel Rhea, said Robert Inrule, rising from his chair, and laying his pipe in an opening between the logs. "I won't have yo' nur no other man insult a minister o' the Gospel in my house. Yo' dare call him an Abolitionist bekase he's a preacher, an' won't fight. I believe jest ez he does, but be keerful how yo' call me an Abolitionist. The mountings aint the place for yo' nigger-owners to slosh an' swagger 'round. None o' us belong t' yo', nor air we low-down overseers, t' drive yer niggers for yo' (with a meaning look at the overseer, who had risen threateningly). My grandfather fit into the Revolution, an' a'ter the war he come over the mountings an' helped drive out the Injuns, an' make hit safe for yo' father t' bring his niggers in. We don't owe yo' nothin', not even good-will, for y've bin 'tarnally swaggerin' round over we'uns who don't own niggers. We'uns don't owe yo' nothin', I tell yo'. Look at me an' my place. Every stone in the walls has bin picked up by my father's hands, or by mine or my boys. Every log in the house has bin cut with our axes. We made the cheers yo' set on. Every stitch o' clothes on our backs wuz raised on this place, with our own labor, an' broke an' hatchelled an' carded an' spun an' wove by our own hands. We owe yo' nothin', I tell yo'. We could live jest ez well if yo' wuz in the bottom o' the sea, where I hope ole Abe Linkum 'll send them cavortin' devils down at Charleston. The mountings, the air, the water an' God's sunshine air ourn. Yo' don't give a mite o' them to us. Clare out now. I've no cattle t' sell yo'."

"Give hit to 'em, Pap," shouted young Reub Inrule, in delight.

"Let me tell yo'," said Henry Clay Pollock, speaking for the first time. "If it comes t' hangin' an' runnin out o' the country, some o' the rest o' us 'll have suthin t' say. We'uns wuz here afore you come in with your niggers, an' overseers, an' low white trash that's meaner even than the niggers. When yo' begin hangin' let me know airly, so's I kin have a fa'r start."

"I'll not stay here now to bandy words with you," said Col. Rhea. "It may be my business in the future to teach you your duty, and then I'll attend to it. Come on, Sniggers."

(To be continued.)

THEY ALL PRAISE IT.

National Tribune Readers Volunteer Good Words.

The manifest improvement of THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE within the past few months has aroused its readers to enthusiasm, and many of them have taken pains to write the Editor solely to express their opinion of the paper. Below are given some of the sentiments:

G. W. Bridges, Postmaster, Brookline, N. H.: I have read THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE many years, and believe it the strongest and best advocate of the old soldiers' interests.

J. E. Walton, Koleen, Ind.: I would rather do without my coffee than without the greatest champion of soldiers' rights in the United States; and you know how hard it would be for an old "coffee-cooler" to do without his favorite beverage.

Thomas D. Lewis, Knoxville, Tenn.: I must join in the praise of THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE'S noble defense of the boys who wore the blue.

Ansel Crouch, West Hallock, Ill.: THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE is better this year than ever before.

N. McBride, Morris, Ill.: Inclosed find subscription for your grand paper. It is impossible to keep a well-regulated, patriotic home without your paper.

Loring Noland, 73d Ohio, Constitution, O.: I think THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE the best paper in the country. So long as I can raise a dollar to pay for it I shall not do without it.

Lorenzo Cady, Co. M, 1st Mass. H. A., Elbert, Colo.: Send your valuable paper to a comrade, and make his heart glad by giving him to read that which he can rely upon. My family always have sworn by THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

Ezra Smith, Cherry Flats, Pa.: I have taken THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE so many years I cannot do without it.

N. A. Tallman, Gay's Mill, Wis.: THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE is my next-best reading matter to the Bible.

Henry Schneider, St. Helena, Cal.: It gives me pleasure to be able to read THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

H. Hopkins, Co. A, 13th Ohio Cav., Galion, O.: THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE is the best paper issued in America.

Peter Hermis, Co. H, 8th Mich. Cav., Phillipsburg, N. J.: You have always fought for our rights, and I hope you will continue the same, for there is nothing like having a friend in need. I will stick to you always as long as I have a dollar to spare, and I will always try to have it when the time comes.

H. Warren Phelps, Westerville, O.: Your paper fills a vacancy no other paper can. All families of veterans should read it, and many a family who had no representative in the war for the Union would have a better conception of the services rendered for them if they would read its contents.

George W. Tibbetts, Inspector General of the Department of Washington and Alaska, and Delegate-at-Large to the National Encampment, Issaquah, Wash.: "I want to say a word in praise of our great NATIONAL TRIBUNE. It is growing better and better every week, and I don't see how any old soldier, or for that matter how any loyal citizen, can get along without it. I believe it is doing more to encourge and build up the country and instill patriotism in the hearts of the people than any other 50 papers in the United States. Long may the old NATIONAL TRIBUNE live. I hope it will finally go into the homes of a million loyal people."

Kirk Brown, Winfield, Kan.: I do not want to miss a number of your paper.